

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and House
of Representatives:

The guardianship of the interests of this
Commonwealth, which fall within the
province of its civil government, has, by the
favor of Providence, been committed to us;
and we come together for the purpose of in-
vestigation. If we would discharge, in the
best manner, the duties it involves, we shall
begin and end every thing, with a recogni-
tion of our dependence upon Him "from
whom all good counsels and all just works
proceed." While His claims upon our fa-
delity to Himself will become an ever pre-
cious incentive to fidelity in the service of the
people we represent.

The year which is drawing toward a
close has been one of prosperity to our peo-
ple. Though threatened drought has re-
peatedly filled them with apprehension and
alarm, they have finally been permitted to
 reap an abundant harvest—thus happily
 finding increased motives to gratitude, in
dilemmas from impending danger, ren-
dered the more impressive by strong con-
trast with less favored portions of our coun-
try.

A great trust has been committed to us
as the constituted guardians of the interest of
this people. If, in the struggles con-
nected with the election which has sent us
here, we have exhibited unworthy passions
in political contests, we cannot come here
and enter upon the sober work of surveying
our responsibilities, without dismissing
them all, taking each other by the hand as
fellow citizens and brethren, and striving
to renew and to fulfil the faith of our fathers, and the
futurity of the great ends for which
they established the government we have
been appointed to administer. How shall we best accomplish these ends, within the
brief space of our annual session? is a
question to which you will allow me brief-
ly to invite your attention.

The institution of civil government is de-
signed to become an actively beneficial
agency. The restraint of force is far from
being its only object. Excepting in gov-
ernments purely arbitrary, law derives its
energy from a force extraneous to itself—the
force of a deep and abiding sentiment of
convention for law, a love of order, habitual
self-restraint, elevation and purity of moral
feeling, and intelligence to guide it wisely
in the complicated affairs of human life.

Civil government, then, accomplishes its
object, not when it punishes crime, but
when it prevents its commission,—not by
providing jails and penitentiaries, but by
preventing the necessity of their existence,
by training the people, as far as law can
properly interfere, to intelligence and the
love of virtue. The fathers of our
State felt this; when, with characteristic
wisdom, they declared in the constitution,
that "laws for the encouragement of virtue
and the prevention of vice and immorality
ought to be constantly kept in force and di-
lly executed, and a competent number of
schools ought to be maintained in each
town, for the convenient instruction of youth,
and one or more grammar schools be in-
corporated and properly supported in each
county in the State." Thus were the en-
couragements of virtue, the suppression of
vice, and the maintenance of schools deemed
so vital to the welfare of the State, as to
demand for them a special provision in its
organic law.

So large a portion of my first annual
message to the General Assembly was de-
voted to the subject of education, that I deem
it necessary to do little more, now, than to
refer you, as I most respectfully do, to that
message for my views in regard to it.

The present has been truly denominat-
ed an age of progress. The human mind is
vigorously acting, and carrying out its
practical results, the momentous truths
which respect the relations of man to each
other, and the appropriate means of accom-
plishing the purposes of human society and
government. At the foundation of this
great movement lies the great work of Edu-
cation—the task of developing, and giving a
right direction to mental and moral power.
And if human government is to be re-
garded as an institution designed to perfect
the purposes of society, and improve the
condition of man upon earth, it is no less
obligatory to know, that education, thus defined, is among the highest duties of
the community, which is as indispensable
to their vigorous health and prosperity,
as a pure and healing atmosphere is to the
support of human life.

We want a system of supervision which
shall make the power of beneficent legisla-
tion felt, through competent and discreet
agencies, in every district, and by every
child, in the State. Shall we have it?—

That is the question, and it presses upon
us more urgently than any other question
within the range of our legislative duties.

We cannot avoid its consideration. The
States around us are moving onward in the
work of improvement, and so urgent have
been considered the claims of common
schools upon legislative patronage,—so
monstrous the defects of old systems of super-
vision and instruction, and so common and
universal the benefits to be derived from
improvement in both that party spirit has
swelled in presence of this great ques-
tion, and all classes, and all parties, have
made common cause in the noble work of
educational improvement.

The expense of carrying into effect a sys-
tem of adequate supervision need not be
great, while its benefit will be immeasurable.
Dollars and cents cannot measure
their value. We readily make investments
in railroads, and other improvements, which
promise a return of pecuniary profit, but
what are such investments, in comparison
with those which, in the process of educat-
ing a community in wisdom and intelligence,
abso-
lutely into it, the great and indispensable
elements of solid and enduring prosperity?

I commend this whole subject to your
earnest consideration, under a full pers-
pective, and an awakened and greatly advanced
public sentiment will respond a hearty
appreciation to your favorable action on it.

I cannot leave the subject of common
schools, without devoting a few moments
attention to what is familiarly denominated
the School Fund. The foundation of this
fund was laid in 1825, when the General
Assembly passed an act sequestering and
granting, in the respective towns in the
State, for the benefit of common schools, the
amount of the avails accrued, and thereafter
to accrue to the State, from the Vermont
State Bank, and also the amount of the
State funds accruing from the six per
cent on the net profits of the banks re-
ceived and so received, and the amount
received and to be received from licensees to
peddlars. It was provided that said funds,
with the annually accruing interest, should

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BY GEO. H. BEAMAN

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be "invested in approved bank stocks, or
other productive securities," and should not
be appropriated to the use of schools, until
the amount should increase to a sum whose
annual interest should be adequate to defray
the expenses of keeping a good free com-
mon school, in each district in the State, for
the period of two months.

The State Treasurer was constituted a
commissioner for the management of the
fund, who thereupon proceeded to invest
the same, by loans, for the purpose contemplat-
ed in the act.

By an act passed in the year 1833, fur-
ther loans from the fund were prohibited,
and the Treasurer was directed to deposit
the same in the treasury, as it should be re-
ceived, and to keep an account thereof, and
annually charge the State with the interest
on the money thus deposited—which, it was
declared, "shall be considered as bor-
rowed from the fund," and the Treasurer
was authorized and directed to pay out
said money on any appropriations author-
ized by law.

Under the operation of this act, and prin-
cipally in connection with the expenditure
of \$117,000, for the erection of the State
House, the State, from time to time, has
become indebted to this fund, until the indebt-
edness is now amounts, including the accum-
ulations of interest, to the sum of \$224,
360.50, while there is due to it from individuals,
the sum of \$10,590.94, making an aggregate
of \$234,950.44.

The expediency of continuing this fund
has long been questioned. Upon full consider-
ation, I deem it my duty to bring the
subject to your notice, and to submit the
question, whether any present or pro-
prietive interest of the people requires that it be
continued.

From the statistics returned to me last
year, from 159 of the 240 towns in the
State, I drew the conclusion in my report
to the General Assembly, that there was
paid to teachers in the whole State, exclu-
sive of teachers of select schools—from
which there were no returns—the sum of
\$128,000 annually. No one can soberly
consider this subject, without feeling par-
ticularly impressed with a conviction of the
utter waste of a very great portion of this
large sum. It is not extravagant to say,
that its power for good might have been
double, if it had been expended under a
system of supervision which should have
carried into the schools, teachers fully com-
petent, and modes of instruction founded
upon the true philosophy of mind, and a
practical acquaintance with the means best
adapted to its true and proper education.—
We do not so much need, at the present
moment, additional pecuniary means, as we do
a system adapted to give greater efficacy to
those already possessed, a system which
shall give a right direction to effort, and
make it effectual to the proper education of
the children of the State. The whole, so
far as the aid of legislation may be properly
invoked, is comprehended in the preg-
nant words—Supervision—Responsibility.

We have, now, nothing that deserves the
name of either. We have provided, in
the first, for the organization of districts, and
the employment of teachers by it, a pro-
claimed committee, who are authorized and
required to adopt measures for the inspec-
tion, examination, and regulation, of the
schools, and the improvement of the school
arts in learning. But experience has
shown, abundantly, that all this is unavail-
ing to the purpose of securing a proper ex-
amination, or, indeed, any examination of
teachers, or a proper supervision of the
schools, or to awaken that interest in these
improvements among parents, and throughout
the community, which is as indispens-
able to their vigorous health and prosperity,
as a pure and healing atmosphere is to the
support of human life.

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universal the benefits to be derived from
improvement in both that party spirit has
swelled in presence of this great ques-
tion, and all classes, and all parties, have
made common cause in the noble work of
educational improvement.

The great question is now presented—
what, in reference to this fund, is our duty
to the generation of 1878? Admitting, of
course, that it is our duty to labor for the
benefit of that generation, the question is—
will that generation be really benefited by
a continuance of the fund? If we could
send forward to them, really invested in
"approved bank stocks, or other productive
securities" according to the act constituting
the fund, will produce \$2,000,000.79
on the first of July, 1878, so that the
children who shall be in life in that year,
will reap the first fruits of the fund, if it
shall be so long continued. This assumes
however, the doubtful position, that six per
cent, interest may be realized throughout
the entire intervening period of thirty-two
years and three months, and makes no al-
lusion to the effects of old systems of super-
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the expenses of keeping a good free com-
mon school, in each district in the State, for
the period of two months.

The great purpose of criminal law is re-
formation. This purpose lies at the found-
ation of the penitentiary system which com-
bines with imprisonment, hard labor, and
a course of moral discipline suited to bring
back offenders to the paths of rectitude and
virtue. But this system is applicable, under
our laws, only to the higher offenses leaving a large class of offenders without
the benefit of any such reforming process
and substituting for its confinement in the
county jails—in some cases, with the alter-
native of the payment of fines into the town
or county treasuries, for non payment, im-
prisonment necessarily follows.

Whether confinement in the county jail
is inflicted as a punishment or results from
incapacity to pay fines, it obviously has an ef-
fect contrary to the reverse of reformation. It
is impossible to visit a convict, thus thrown into a county jail, with little or no
attention to any except his mere animal wants, without feeling painfully impressed
with the conviction, that it is an unnatural and monstrous perversion of the power of
punishment. Without employment or ex-
ercise, the convict is left to the corroding and
maddening influence of the reflection that he is cast out from the charity and
sympathy of the world, and that the law and its executioners are alike his enemies. Every moment's communion of such confinement tends to weaken his propensities of amendment, and prepare him for abandonment to the commission of higher offenses.

In these remarks, I am understood, of
course to have spoken of that part of the
fund which consists of the indebtedness of
the state, amounting at this time, to the sum
of \$224,360.50. An act to annul this in-
debtedness would lead to its disposal of the
sum of \$10,590.94, invested in individ-
ual securities bearing interest. None would
think of having this sum accumulate, even
with the addition of six per cent, on bank
profits, and the income from pedlar's licens-
es, with a view of making them available
for schools, under the act of 1825.

The demand for funds is still, in putting
in operation a system of common school im-
provement, such as the State needs and pub-
lic sentiment evidently demands, suggests
the direction which might be given to a part
or all, of these sources of income, when re-
leased from their present connection. It is
believed that the annually accruing interest
on that portion of the present school fund,
based on private securities, together with
the annual income from pedlar's licens-
es would be sufficient for that purpose.

If future generations would not be bene-
fited by this fund, neither will the present.
This is self evident. Why, then, continue
it?

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The remedy for this evil is obvious. It
is the application of the principle of peni-
tentary discipline to minor offenses, by
means of houses of correction in each coun-
ty—to be made comfortable in their struc-
ture and accommodations, and to be
connected with such arrangements for the
profitable employment of the inmates, and
the exercise of such firm and steady disci-
pline as sound wisdom, and the spirit of
Christian kindness may suggest. By such
means may offenders be made useful to the
public, during the necessary continuance
of their confinement, while the higher pur-
pose shall be answered, of impressing up-
on their minds, by every thing that they
shall see around them, that they are men
bound to society, not by the law of force
merely, but by the higher law of obligation,
as well as by the sympathies of our com-
mon nature.

Such a course of treatment would doubt-
less have a very happy influence upon "va-
grants and idle and disorderly persons," for
whose restraint and discipline our laws
have made no provision, save that of the town
poor houses, which by the 21st section of
chapter 17 of the Revised Statutes, are con-
sidered houses of correction, but which, while
they involve the evil of unnatural mingling
of the aged and infirm poor with the restive
and troublesome, can seldom be made to
accomplish, to any considerable extent, the
purposes of correction and reform.

Should it be found that no interest of the
present, or of the future generations, can be
benefited by a continuance of the state in-
debtedness to the fund of which I have spoken,
and the indebtedness should be freed, the state
debt would then stand as follows:

Due to the safety fund banks, in-
cluding interest to Oct 1, \$30,389.81

Due to the surplus
fund, \$14,812.28

Deduct the amt.
loaned out the
past year, 11,094.00

Plus fund, 3,808.28

Salaries due Oct 1, 1,108.33

To the towns for interest on sur-
plus fund, 144.36

Total, \$35,750.75

The balance in the treasury on
the 13th of Sept was, 18,418.97

Balance of taxes due, 25,224.50

Total, \$41,650.47

To what extent the service of the
coming year—a portion of which necessarily
constitutes a drain on the present balances
in the Treasury and on taxes—will permit
the application of a part of those balances
towards the extinguishment of the indebted-
ness of the state, may be determined, upon
careful examination which ought to be made
into every branch of expenditure, with a
view to ascertain whether there can be any
reduction, consistently with the public in-
terest. In looking at the expenditures of
past years, I have been struck with the
large amount disbursed under the heads of
Supreme and County Court orders, and
Clerks of Courts for the expenses of Sup-
erior and Co. Courts, which have risen from
\$20,435 in 1839, to \$28,970 in 1845—
The amount disbursed under these heads
during the last seven years has been \$184,
300, averaging \$25,528 per annum.

This would suggest the propriety of an examina-
tion into the details of these large items of
expenditure—in regard to which it may
possibly be found that, in a course of years
above, there has been a reduction, requiring corrective
legislation.

The treasury is happily relieved from a
charge which for many years long upon it,
in the form of "military orders," which, for
the five years previous to, and including
the year 1843, when they ceased to be a
drain on the treasury, amounted to the sum
of \$18,501. I am happy to say, that by a
law of last year, the people are relieved
from the still more burdensome tax of annual
trainings of the enrolled militia.